

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 13-02-2006		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> FINAL		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b>	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b>  Seabasing; The US Army's Role				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b>  Jason Hoge, Major USA				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>  Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>	
				<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> A paper submitted to the faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b>  Due to the nature of today's world consisting of unpredictable rogue Nations which desire to utilize weapons of mass destruction, the US military will be expected to react with less response time while covering greater areas. This dilemma will require a future basing option be available to the Regional Combatant Commander that is predictable and independent of stalled diplomatic negotiation and host nation constraints. Seabasing will provide this option while maintaining flexibility and by integrating elements of the joint force. Operations from the sea will serve to mitigate land based threats. As a key player, the US Army must transform and gain the ability to operate from the seabase. This change will allow the Army to better support the Joint Force in conjunction with having the ability to rapidly project forces and pre-positioned stocks through austere ports. The seabase will provide the Regional Combatant Commander with a forward deployed Army force which can serve as a flexible deterrent option or as a means to execute missions throughout the range of military operations.					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> <b>Seabase, Army, Pre-positioned Stock, Maritime Army Assault Force, afloat</b>					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>		<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b>	
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED			c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED	Chairman, JMO Dept
			22		

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, RI**

**SEABASING  
The US Army's Role**

**By**

**Jason Hoge  
Major US Army**

**A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily  
endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Due: 13 February 2006**

**Richard Findlay, Colonel USMC  
Faculty Advisor**

## **Abstract**

Due to the nature of today's world consisting of unpredictable rogue Nations which desire to utilize weapons of mass destruction, the US military will be expected to react with less response time while covering greater areas. This dilemma will require a future basing option be available to the Regional Combatant Commander that is predictable and independent of stalled diplomatic negotiation and host nation constraints. Seabasing will provide this option while maintaining flexibility and by integrating elements of the joint force. Operations from the sea will serve to mitigate land based threats. As a key player, the US Army must transform and gain the ability to operate from the seabase. This change will allow the Army to better support the Joint Force in conjunction with having the ability to rapidly project forces and pre-positioned stocks through austere ports. The seabase will provide the Regional Combatant Commander with a forward deployed Army force which can serve as a flexible deterrent option or as a means to execute missions throughout the range of military operations.

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction	1
Sea Maneuver in the Contemporary Operating Environment	2
Expeditionary Strike Group versus Maritime Army Assault Strike Group	5
Exercising Pre-positioned Stock Afloat	8
Army Training Basis	10
Recommendations	13
Conclusion	15
Illustrations	17
Bibliography	21

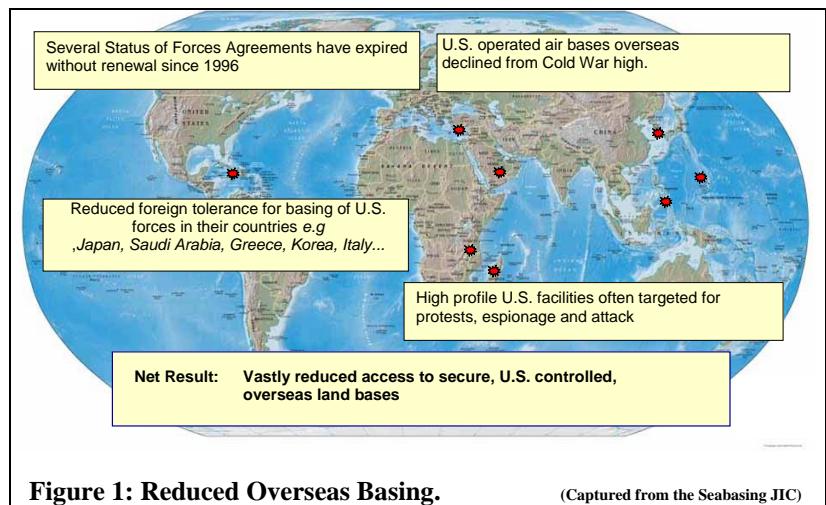
## List of Illustrations

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.	Reduced Overseas Basing	1
2.	Force Projection Options	17
3.	Excerpt Taken from Sea Basing Concept of Operations	18
4.	Afloat Staging Base Concept	19
5.	Vulnerability Gap Areas	19
6.	Proposed makeup of the Expeditionary Strike Group	20
7.	Proposed ships of future US Navy Strike Groups	20

## Introduction

The world has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the United States (US) can no longer assume that Nations will provide their ports and transient over-flight permission to support US interests within the contemporary operating environment (COE). The lack of predictability requires that the US be strategically responsive in order to deal with asymmetric threats and in particular, that the US Army enhances its global expeditionary ability to operate from the sea and project combat power through austere ports.

This dilemma will require a future basing option be available to the Regional Combatant Commander (RCC) that is predictable and independent of stalled diplomatic negotiation and host nation constraints. The option



**Figure 1: Reduced Overseas Basing.**

(Captured from the Seabasing JIC)

which provides the best solution to this dilemma is to operate from the sea or otherwise establish a seabase with Army integration. This proposal will require training and force structure changes within the Army; however it will also provide the Army with the ability to rapidly project forces through an austere port into the Joint Operations Area (JOA). Thus the seabase will provide a forward deployed Army force, which can either serve as a Flexible Deterrent Option (FDO) or as a means to execute missions within the range of military operations (ROMO).

The Army's current position in the seabase remains only conceptual.<sup>1</sup> The Army's Futures Center has studied the seabase and has provided operational and logistical recommendations. This paper will serve to emphasize the Army's operational role and its need to move past the concept phase, nonetheless the paper will not serve to review or make recommendations concerning equipment shortfalls. In the interim, the Army should begin training seabase operations with equipment that is available today.

While seabasing will provide the Army with significant advantages it can be argued that the Army does not need to replicate the features already provided by the Marine Corps. One could also argue that the Army does not have the training to conduct seabasing nor can it afford the lack of training opportunities associated with forward deployed forces positioned on the sea. While these arguments are noteworthy, they are Cold War focused and will be addressed with follow on counter arguments within this paper. In fact, historically "the Army has conducted more amphibious operations than any other service."<sup>2</sup> The Army has a future in seabasing yet it is important to note that seabasing should not be construed as a mission change for the entire Army.

### **Sea Maneuver in the Contemporary Operating Environment**

Sixteen years after the fall of Soviet Union and five years after the events of 9/11, the Army is still transitioning from the traditional operating environment to the COE. This evidence indicates the extensive time required to implement a future paradigm shift. Therefore, the Army needs to refine its role early and begin executing limited sea base

---

<sup>1</sup> Training and Doctrine (TRADOC) Army Futures Center; *Army's Perspective on the Seabase for the Joint Capabilities Board*. July 22, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Quote of Army BG Phillip D. Coker by Sandra Erwin; *Military Bases at Sea: No Longer Unthinkable*. Defense Magazine January, 2004.

operations now in order to implement the Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept (JIC) within the 2015-2025 timeframe.<sup>3</sup>

The Defense Science Board has reviewed the seabasing concept and has provided the following definition:

A seabase is not just a ship, not just pre-positioned materiel, not just helicopter assault – it represents a complex capability. One must think of a seabase as a hybrid system of systems, consisting of concepts of operations, ships, forces, offensive and defensive weapons, aircraft, communications, and logistics, all of which involve careful planning, coordination, and exercising to operate smoothly. The seabase must be robust enough to operate smoothly. The seabase must be robust enough to operate in a wide range of sea conditions and (must) be able to receive supplies from the sea without the support of in-theater land bases.<sup>4</sup>

The current Army seabasing concept of operation envisions the seabase as “the rapid deployment, assembly, command, projection, reconstitution, and re-employment of joint combat power from the sea, while providing continuous support, sustainment, and force protection to select expeditionary joint forces without reliance on land bases within the JOA.”<sup>5</sup> These definitions are complementary to one another yet the ability to support all the Services from the seabase in a major combat operation (MCO) is unlikely. Therefore, the seabase in MCOs would become a piece of the whole force projection process.<sup>6</sup> Its structure would serve to leverage the Joint Force’s strengths in order to project combat power while maintaining flexibility based upon the operational objective and its threats. The seabase would in essence serve as a building block tailored to project forces either as a stand alone element or as part of a larger plan depending upon the objective and the threat.

---

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense. *Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept (JIC)*. Version 1.0 pg 4. August, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Defense Science Board Task Force on seabasing. *Joint Seabasing*. Draft Working Paper v0.45 pre-decisional USNORTHCOM

<sup>5</sup> TRADOC Army Futures Center. *Army Perspective on Seabasing For JCB*. July, 22 2005

<sup>6</sup> See Force Projection Options Illustration Fig. 2

The Army's projection of combat power from a seibase will allow the Joint Force to more efficiently implement the National Defense Strategy (NDS). The NDS requires "a force sized to defend the homeland, deter forward in and from four regions, and conduct two, overlapping 'swift defeat' campaigns."<sup>7</sup> The Navy Seabasing Concept of Operations addresses how it will meet these requirements.<sup>8</sup> Its proposal presents a mix of three Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESG) and two Carrier Strike Groups (CSG) to cover the four regions in the deter phase. The National Military Strategy (NMS), and the NDS require operations in and from four forward regions which are: "Europe, Northeast Asia, the East Asian Littoral and the Middle East – Southwest Asia."<sup>9</sup> The Navy Seabasing Concept of Operation should contain an additional ESG or land projection asset to cover all regions simultaneously.

Therefore, the military should dedicate an additional sea based land projection asset, similar to the ESG, in order to meet the requirement of operating in and from the four forward regions.<sup>10</sup> While the NDS does not specify that regional land forces should be based from the sea, seabasing with land projection assets decreases deployment time and increases joint flexibility to operate in less mature areas. The CSGs can provide crucial air and fire support but they cannot occupy and hold terrain. This limitation must be conducted by a land based force. The Army could cover this land force projection gap while being based on the sea in conjunction with having the ability to project combat power through austere ports. This application would better allow the Joint Force to meet and counter contingencies within all four regions simultaneously.

---

<sup>7</sup> The National Defense Strategy of the United States. Pg 16.

<sup>8</sup> US Navy N703, N75; MCCDC. *Seabasing Concept of Operations (DRAFT)*. See Illustration Fig 3.

<sup>9</sup> National Defense Strategy of the United States. Pg. 17

<sup>10</sup> See Illustration Fig 6, proposed makeup of the ESG

Seabasing would also allow the Army to deliver tailored packages from the sea but would also require significant support from the Navy. The Army's operational movement, fires and Command & Control (C2) would rely heavily upon Naval vessels. Nevertheless this support relationship does not differ much from the traditional operating environment. Naval forces have provided these functions at various levels for the Army throughout its history. Joint assets such as close air support (CAS) could be provided from a CSG or theater based Air Force assets in order to provide the Army with supporting Joint fires. Therefore, the integration of the Navy and the Army within the seabase would require a cross leveling and sharing of assets to collectively accomplish the Joint Force mission. This relationship was displayed frequently in non-Cold War scenarios to include Sicily, Normandy, Inchon, Grenada, Desert Storm, and Haiti.

### **Expeditionary Strike Group vs. a Maritime Army Assault Strike Group**

Arguably, the Army's role in the seabase, while provocative, only duplicates the US Marine Corps' role within an ESG. The military maintains an acceptable amount of forces on the ready and the Marine Corps' Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) in the Atlantic and the Pacific are sufficient to meet new threats. Therefore, any additional afloat assault assets are not required. This point may in fact remain true if the US military never has to deal with all four regions simultaneously, however the Army's role would be simply to support and complement the Joint Force rather than compete with any part of it.

The Naval amphibious assault force is known today as an ESG. The proposed Army element could be considered a Maritime Army Assault Strike Group<sup>11</sup> (MAASG) run in

---

<sup>11</sup> Idea similar to TRADOC Army Futures Center's Operational Strike Group

conjunction with an Army Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB).<sup>12</sup> The difference between the ESG and MAASG lies in the means of operational maneuver. The MEU embarks upon the ESG and then utilizes a company of amphibious assault vehicles launched from ESG vessels in conjunction with an assault and weapons company in order to seize land based objectives. The MEU consists of a ground combat element, air combat element, combat service support element and a command element.<sup>13</sup> The proposed Army MAASG would be similar by adapting the current Army structure. The MAASG could consist of a light brigade combat team, aviation task force, support battalion, AFSB and a headquarters company. Its role would be similar to that of the MEU. The MAASG would project an assault light infantry force up to brigade level via air assault to secure its objectives. These objectives could include seaports, airfields or shaping (rear) targets for the JTF Commander. The MAASG could be used as a main effort force, supporting effort or as a deception operation.

The new transformed light infantry Army division will contain four brigade combat teams and one combat aviation brigade. This light division provides modularity and thus its flexibility will allow various options to be presented in order to provide coverage within the seabase. These brigades will contain three maneuver battalions in which the ‘sea duty’ could be rotated with one being on station, one preparing for relief in place and one returning from afloat duty. The division could operate by rotating its four organic brigades through the division afloat brigade duty on a quarterly or semiannual basis depending how ship rotations would best integrate. The rotation could differ by assigning only two of the division’s four brigades the afloat mission. Then the two assigned brigades would rotate through ‘sea duty’

---

<sup>12</sup> TRADOC Army Futures Center Concept proposes the purchase and reconfiguring of S Class container ships to power projection platforms. See Illustration Fig. 4

<sup>13</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit; dtic.mil

semiannually. These proposals would equate to either a month or two months at sea respectively for each battalion annually.

Army aviation assets would also be required to rotate through the cycle similar to the divisional afloat brigade except on a smaller scale. Due to the fact that doctrinally, one combat aviation brigade (CAB) will support four brigade combat teams, the same force ratio can be developed for Army aviation elements but with smaller forces. The CAB contains four subordinate aviation battalions which can be task organized into four similar aviation battalion task forces. The aviation battalions contain two medium attack battalions (AH-64) or light attack battalions (OH-58D), a medium assault battalion (UH-60 and CH-47), and a general support aviation battalion (GSAB) with utility (UH-60) and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) assets (HH-60). These elements could be cross leveled into four similar Task Forces in order to generate the right array of platforms to support the divisional afloat forces on a quarterly basis.

A current drawback of the MAASG is that it would be critically dependent upon US Naval forces to provide operational logistics. The development of future vessels for the Army could provide a 15-30 day supply level at the tactical level, however beyond 15-30 days (or consumption of low density parts) the Task Force would require inter-theater logistics support from naval cargo assets. The logistical connectors between the seabase and its higher level support structure remain an issue that requires further development due to equipment shortfalls. Currently, the Joint Forces do not have the correct type of equipment that will allow implementation of the Seabase JIC. Examples of this equipment include the Austere Access High Speed Ship (AAHSS) and the Joint Heavy Lift Helicopter (JLH), nevertheless these programs are being refined towards implementation in 2015. In the

interim, the seabase is possible by using a complementing mix of CSGs, ESGs, replenishment ships, high speed vessels (HSV), and pre-positioning ships in conjunction with the shorter ranges between the seabase and its supporting intermediate bases.

### **Exercising Pre-positioned Stock Afloat**

The Army maintains four pre-positioned stocks worldwide which are located in Europe, Northeast Asia, Southwest Asia as ground based elements and one at sea which remains afloat. These pre-positioned forces are designated to support armor and mechanized infantry units.<sup>14</sup> The Army pre-positioned stock afloat is used today in mature ports and unloaded only when permissive conditions exist.

The theory of afloat pre-positioning is to project heavy assets forward so that combat elements can be quickly fielded following the downloading of equipment and intra theater movement of personnel. The afloat assets are disadvantaged



from ground based pre-positioned assets because the afloat equipment is restricted to only shipboard movement. This shortfall is thus characterized by an inability to ensure combat readiness.

The Army Pre-positioned Stock Afloat could be integrated into the seabase and serve as a FDO or to project combat power. The employment of the afloat stock would still require the initial seizure of sea ports by either the ESG or the proposed MAASG in conjunction with the establishment of localized land and sea security. With this approach, the afloat

---

<sup>14</sup> Department of the Army. *Army Prepositioned Stock (APS) Strategy Overview*; DAMO-SSW Force Projection Branch

stock could be utilized as a follow on force with operational maneuver originating from the sea via high speed vessel to the seized port.

This proposed paradigm shift would require the current configuration of the afloat stock to implement a planned embarkation of unit personnel prior to its movement to the seabase. Designated units could be flown to an advanced staging base in order to match personnel to its afloat equipment prior to arriving to the JOA. This method would provide for quick employment of the pre-positioned stock upon arrival at the seabase in both exercise and real world scenarios.

The afloat stock's movement in an expeditionary nature would also facilitate its more frequent offloading during exercises for validation and training. Continental US (CONUS) based modular units could deploy worldwide to meet their afloat equipment at a mission readiness site. This application can be summarized by an example which portrays the Army's movement to Eastern Europe. The Army envisions CONUS based expeditionary units rotating through future forward training bases in Romania while operating from sea ports on the Black Sea.<sup>15</sup> This scenario could be further developed to serve a secondary purpose in order to prove the operational readiness of afloat equipment. Personnel and afloat equipment could be joined in advance, transition forward to conduct seabased equipment offload, conduct tactical unit maneuver and finally execute a live fire continuation exercise in Romania. This dual purpose exercise would improve the afloat equipment reliability for 'real' combat applications. It would also serve to conduct continuation training for deployed troops, thus leveraging the pre-positioned afloat's strengths. The current use of the pre-

---

<sup>15</sup> Sullivan, Kevin. *Romanians Eager for Long Awaited Arrival of the Yanks*. The Washington Post. Monday February 6, 2006

positioned afloat assets do not allow for an expeditious offload and transition to combat operations.

The use of the afloat pre-positioned assets in this manner would also establish unit ownership for the equipment. Initial (torch) parties from future gaining units would meet rotating units at their capstone mission readiness sites in order to witness equipment status, note its placement back into the storage vessels and conduct stockage inventories prior to assuming ‘sea duty’ status. This proof of readiness exercise could also serve to implement the equipment’s use for joint forces. The afloat pre-positioned elements must ultimately serve to meet the requirements of a joint force. “Single service pre-positioned capabilities will no longer suffice. As in all other aspects of transformation, pre-positioning must be increasingly joint in character.”<sup>16</sup> The joint use of afloat assets while important will most likely require additional time in order for component logistical systems to evolve into a complementing network; however its joint application should be the goal. In the interim, the joint force can integrate by becoming familiar with each others pre-positioned stock in order to leverage strengths while also becoming aware of joint pre-positioned stock shortfalls.

### **Army Training Basis**

Arguably, the Army is not trained to operate to and from sea based sites and therefore if it is not prepared, it should not conduct operations from the sea. This position while argumentative holds various levels of merit based upon which type of unit is discussed. Invariably, any Army unit which seeks to operate from a naval ship must undergo various levels of training ranging from simple to complex.

---

<sup>16</sup> The National Defense Strategy of The United States of America. Pg 19

The army assault infantry element and its support force under the proposed MAASG would be the easiest element to transform to a naval based assault element. Soldiers would be required to learn many new skills at sea to include downed helicopter procedures and on board firefighting skills. The Army could also transition its simulation devices similar to the engagement skills trainer 2000 so that Army elements could conduct simulation based continuation training while underway. Beyond these new skill sets, the assault force's mission would remain primarily unchanged as a land based force. An additional mission area such as hostile ship boarding techniques could be trained however this skill set would be dependent upon the makeup of the JOA strike groups.

The second method of employment utilizing a heavy follow on force projected from afloat assets would require a moderate level of training. The most significant element would be how to transition the operational movement of the pre-positioned stock to a tactical follow-on landing force while at sea. This task would require ship to ship transfer of equipment from an inter-theater ship to a smaller intra-theater vessel. Army tactical units would require training from Army theater port support teams; nonetheless this training could be easily implemented into unit training with units that are located in close proximity to their CONUS based Sea Port of Embarkation (SPOE). Currently, Army theater port teams utilize approved access deep water sea ports under permissive conditions to conduct equipment reception and staging while the tactical units conduct onward movement and integration. This proposed change would require the



union of unit personnel and pre-positioned equipment at an advanced theater staging base. Then the tactical unit would stage its equipment in conjunction with theater port support personnel while on the seabase. Onward movement and integration would take place as the unit transitions from the seabase through the austere port.

The Army aviation element seeking to transition to naval based operations would require six months to a year of extensive training in order to align all personnel and equipment to naval standards. Training examples would include naval aviation ground school, dunker training, helicopter emergency egress device system qualification, day/night deck landing qualifications, firefighting, ground handling and shipboard maintenance procedures. While these training requirements remain robust, Army aviation must look into its history to see the frequency in which Army aviation assets are expected to operate in maritime environments. “In nearly every major conflict and operation since World War II, Army aviation has been assigned missions in the maritime environment, either basing off naval vessels for land attack or operating from ships for sustained missions.”<sup>17</sup> Military operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century require its Services to undergo Joint integration. While the training requirements may be extensive for Army aviation units, they should be designated now so that mission essential tasks lists can be adjusted and training completed in order to avoid potential waivers in a time constrained environment. The fact is clear that Army aviation has operated from naval ships in the past and will be expected to do so in the future.

The current Army training model does not support the Army’s integration into the seabase. It is imperative that units be identified so that skill sets, pre-deployment training and mission readiness exercises can be completed before Army units are tasked to operate from the sea in a National crisis. While the Marine Corps maintains the focal point in

---

<sup>17</sup> Headquarters Department of the Army. *FM 1-564 Shipboard Operations*. Pg 1-1

maritime assault operations, the Army must be prepared to augment, support or become the main effort as the Joint mission requires. The Army has conducted maritime operations throughout its history to include Sicily, Normandy, Inchon, Grenada, Haiti and Desert Storm; therefore the current Cold War training paradigm must change so that the Army is prepared to support the Joint Task Force in the future.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Army integrates into the Joint seibase in order to complement the Joint Force.

The Army must further its transformation into the COE in order to meet and counter asymmetric threats. As Nations continue to join the Global War on Terror (GWOT), terrorists will be forced to seek refuge in remote areas and underdeveloped countries with austere sea and air ports.<sup>18</sup> The Joint Force cannot assume that all Nations will grant US basing and over flight status throughout the world even if they are members of the GWOT. An example which illustrates this point is when Turkey, a NATO ally, denied the US use of its sovereign territory to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. Turkish citizens ultimately determined the final outcome when the US request for basing and over-flight were denied by a Parliamentary vote. US diplomacy can work to influence foreign leaders yet it seldom works to influence the people of a non-belligerent sovereign nation. Therefore, the US must be prepared to project power from the sea and the Army must adapt to this paradigm shift. The Navy is prepared to support as it has defined the seibase as a core element of Sea Power

---

<sup>18</sup> See Illustration Fig 5 USJFC World Vulnerability Gaps.

21 in order to “enhance operational independence and support for the joint force.”<sup>19</sup> The Army’s history is filled with examples of seabased operations yet the Army lost its maritime perspective during the Cold War. The Army must adapt now to be relevant in the future.

2. The Army must refine a Maritime Army Assault Strike Group (MAASG) to complement Expeditionary and Carrier Strike Groups

The Army does not need to reproduce a MEU but must create a seabased power projection element that can augment and support a CSG or ESG. Operations could be in support of either the Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander or the Joint Forces Land Component Commander. The Army’s seabase implementation could consist of designating units for ‘sea duty’ based upon a rotational plan. This rotation could be conducted by projecting a light infantry battalion afloat at all times in conjunction with a surge capability of one light brigade combat team in order to provide continuous presence. The MAASG is the force of choice to provide this capability to the Army. While maritime support vessels would need to be configured to support this concept, it is imperative that the Army acts now. The Joint capability to provide presence, deter and engage within four world regions could be rapidly compromised if the US is fighting major combat operations in two regions while maintaining presence in the remaining two regions. The National Military Strategy requires the US Military to maintain these requirements.

3. The Army must advance and integrate its Afloat Pre-positioned Stock into the seabase and Joint Theater exercises.

---

<sup>19</sup> Admiral Vern Clark; Sea Power 21.

The Army's afloat pre-positioned stock must be able to operate and project forces from a seabase. Currently the process is time consuming and usually assumes a permissive environment from a deep sea port. The Army's follow on force heavy units must become familiar with tactical maneuver from the sea and learn how to operate through austere ports in order to effectively project forces in the COE. This requires extensive training and the marrying of theater port support elements, tactical units, Joint High Speed Vessels (HSV) and Naval vessels. While this task would be exhaustive to train the entire the Army, it could be kept manageable by designating a limited number of brigades to conduct this mission. Exercising afloat pre-positioned assets into joint theater exercises will serve as a combat multiplier in order to prove equipment operational readiness and its ability to shoot, maneuver and communicate.

## **CONCLUSION**

Today “70% of the world’s population lives within 200 miles of the sea and 80% of the world’s capitals are located within 300 miles of a coast.”<sup>20</sup> Due to these significant facts, the lack of future predictable basing options and the shrinking defense budget, the Army must evolve and integrate into the joint seabase concept. This idea will serve to better complement the Joint Force and execute the NDS and the NMS. The integration of the Army into amphibious operations provides the Joint Force the leverage it requires to simultaneously conduct FDOs from the sea or project land forces simultaneously into the four prescribed NDS regions. These Army forces can provide humanitarian assistance, counter-insurgency operations, peace operations, non-combatant evacuations and force entry

---

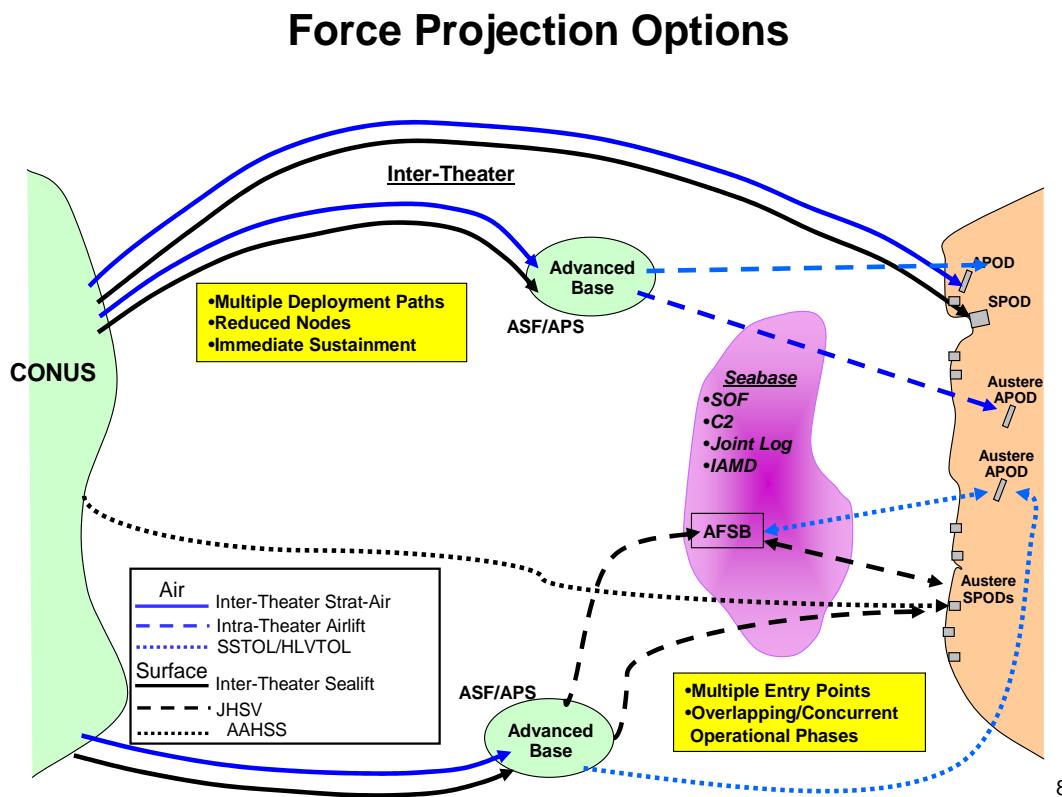
<sup>20</sup> Statement of LTG Martin R. Steele, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Operations, US Marine Corps Before the Senate sea power Subcommittee of The Senate Armed Services Committee; 10 Mar 99.

shaping operations as an element of the Joint Force. While the Marine Corp's MEU can also provide these elements, its sustained capability could be rapidly consumed if operating within all the regions. Therefore, the Army must adapt to the COE by continuing its transformation of forces and afloat assets in order to be strategically effective in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 2

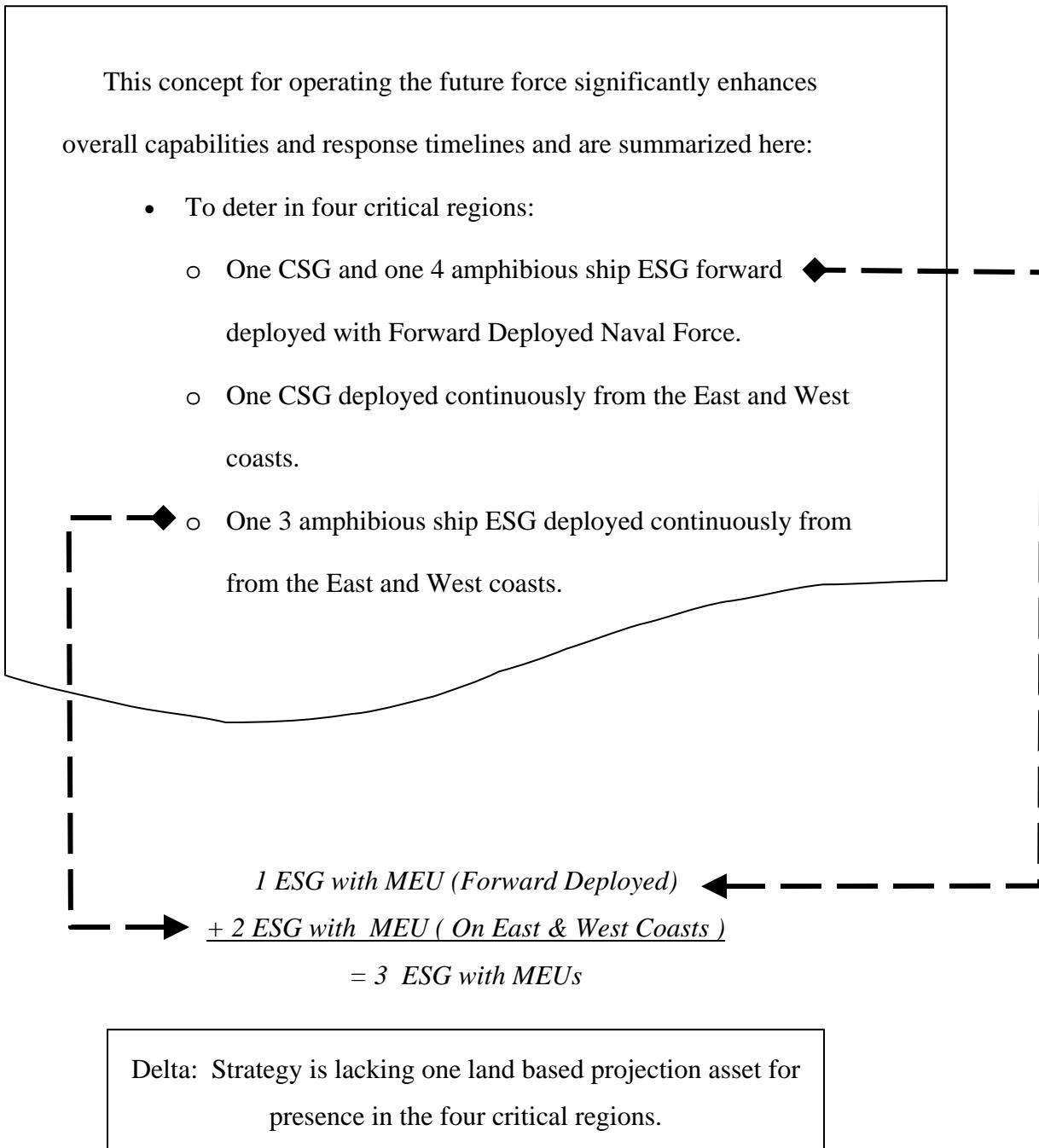
Theater Overview, Joint Force Projection Concept, 2015-2024<sup>21</sup>



<sup>21</sup> Figure drawn from: *Army Perspective on Seabasing for JCB*. Strategic Plans and Policy, Headquarters Department of the Army. Pg 8

Figure 3

Explanation of allocated assets from the Seabasing Concept of Operations.<sup>22</sup>



<sup>22</sup> Excerpt from United States Navy N703, N75 MCCDC. *Sea Basing CONOPS*. Pg 6.

Figure. 4

Army Futures Center Concept for the Afloat Forward Staging Base<sup>23</sup>

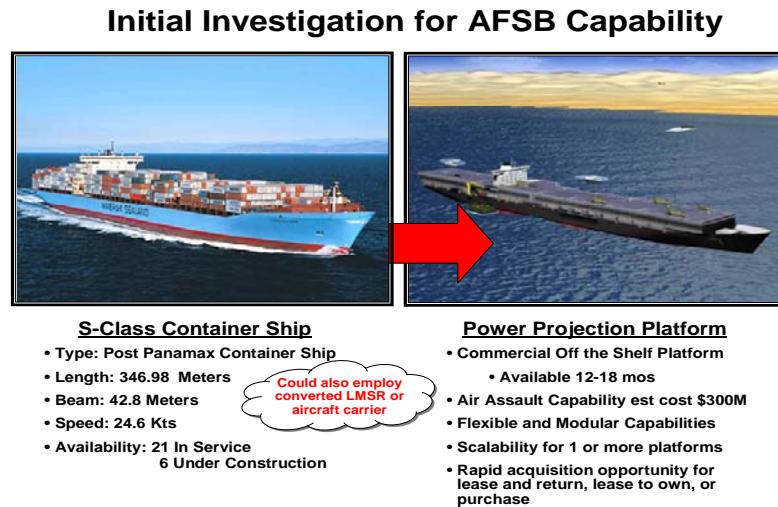
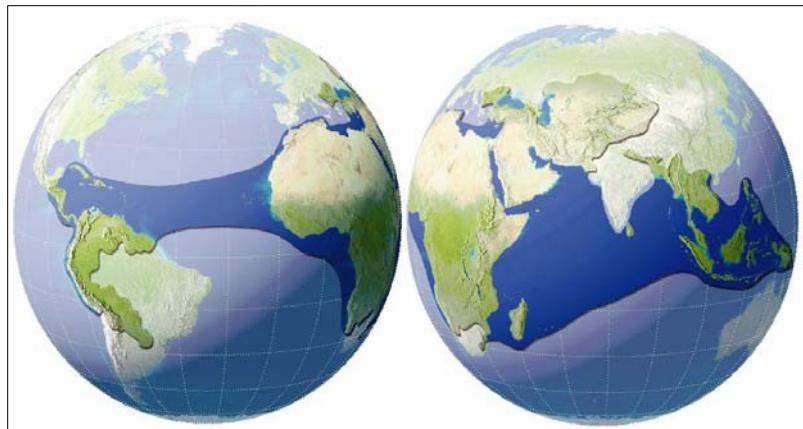


Figure 5

United States Joint Forces Vulnerability Gap (dark-shaded areas)<sup>24</sup>



<sup>23</sup> Figure captured from: *The Operational Strike Group*. TRADOC Futures Center Brief. Pg. 5

<sup>24</sup> Figure captured from: *Joint Seabasing*, United States Joint Forces Command.

## Figure. 6

### Makeup of an ESG<sup>25</sup>

The Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) centers on the flexibility and readiness of a combined expeditionary unit and an amphibious readiness group (ARG). The total ESG provides operational freedom and expanded warfare capabilities, not only by land with embarked Marines, but at sea, as well. The exact make-up of an Expeditionary Strike Group is in the process of being defined, but currently consists of:

- An Amphibious Assault Ship (LHA or LHD)
- An Amphibious Transport Dock (LPD) Ship
- A Dock Landing Ship (LSD)
- Guided Missile Cruiser
- Guided Missile Destroyer
- Frigate
- Attack Submarine
- A Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)
- AV-8B *Harrier II*
- CH-53E *Super Stallion* helicopters
- CH-46D *Sea Knight* helicopters
- AH-1W *Super Cobra* helicopters

## Figure 7

### Projected Surface Ships Compromising the 2015 Sea Base Groups (US Navy)<sup>26</sup>

Group	Ships
CSG	CVN, CG, DDG, LCS, T-AOE6, T-AOE(X)
ESG	LHA(R), LHD, LPD-17, LSD-41, CG, DDG FFG, DD(X), LCS
SAG	CG, DDG, LCS
MPG	MPF(F)

<sup>25</sup> Excerpt captured from The US Naval Office of Information.

<sup>26</sup> Figure captured from the Roadmap of Science and Technology (S&T) / Research and Development (R&D) Capabilities Phase 1.

## Bibliography

Campbell, Mark. United States Army. *Update on Army-Navy- USMC Austere Access High Speed Ship (AAHSS) Project*. Ft. Eustis, VA. Sep 29, 2005

Clark, Admiral Vern. *U.S. Navy Sea Power 21 Projecting Decisive Joint Capabilities* US Navy Proceedings, October 2002

Erwin, Sandra I. *Military Bases at Sea: No Longer Unthinkable*. National Defense Magazine January, 2004

Fastabend, BG David. United States Army. *Army Force Projection Overview Strategic Responsiveness and Operational Agility*. Futures Center TRADOC

Department of Defense. *Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept*. Version 1.0 August 1, 2005.

Defense Technical Information Center. *Marine Expeditionary Unit*.  
[dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddctt/data/m/03222.html](http://dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddctt/data/m/03222.html)

Headquarters Department of the Army. *Shipboard Operations*. Field Manual 1-564

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Technology, and Logistics, Defense Science Board Task Force on Sea Basing. *Final Report*. August 2003  
Washington, D.C.

Steele, LTG Martin R., Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Operations.  
*Concerning Requirements for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Marine Corps Tactical Sealift and Tactical Airlift*. US Marine Corps Before the Senate Sea power Subcommittee of The Senate Armed Services Committee; Mar, 10 1999.

Sullivan, Kevin. *Romanians Eager for Long Awaited Arrival of the Yanks*. The Washington Post. Monday February 6, 2006

United States Joint Forces Command. *Joint Seabasing*. Version XX Draft Working Paper, v0.45 Pre-decisional June 1, 2004

United States Army. *Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS) Strategy Overview*. Headquarters Department of the Army. August, 11 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Army Perspective on Seabasing for JCB*. Strategic Plans and Policy, Headquarters Department of the Army. July, 22 2005

\_\_\_\_\_. *Operational Strike Group, Deployment by Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB)*. Strategic Plans and Policy HQDA Jul 5, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB) Leadership Update*. Oct 4, 2004

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sustainment via Seabasing*. US Army Futures Center Training and Doctrine Command

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Army in Joint Operations The Army's Future Force Capstone Concept 2015-2024*. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0

United States Navy. *Roadmap of Science and Technology (S&T) / Research and Development (R&D) Capabilities Phase 1*. Naval Seabasing Littoral Warfare Systems and Ship and Ship Systems Program Area Directors. Jun, 15 2004

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sea Basing CONOPS*. N703, N75 MCCDC. Mar 11, 2004

United States Naval Office of Information. *The Expeditionary Strike Group*.  
<http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/news/.www/esg.html>

Zimmer, LTC Darrin. (Army LNO to Navy Warfare Developmental Command Newport Rhode Island) Interview by author on January 31, 2006.